

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: CASC, CGEN, YO

SUBJECT: ALLEGED BEATING OF AMCIT BY YUGOSLAV POLICE

1. CONGRESSMAN LAGOMARSINO (CALIFORNIA) HAS REQUESTED THAT WE INVESTIGATE ALLEGED BEATING BY YUGOSLAV POLICE OF AMCIT IMOGENE BERCAW, A TOUR GUIDE, AND DUTCH CITIZEN CHRISTIAN LIMBACH, MISS BERCAW'S BUS DRIVER AT TIME OF INCIDENT.

2. INCIDENT REPORTEDLY OCCURRED JULY 30 ON HIGHWAY BETWEEN ROZAJE AND TITOGRAĐ APPROXIMATELY 60 KMS. FROM ROZAJE. BUS DRIVEN BY MR. LIMBACH AND CARRYING MISS BERCAW AND 40 AMERICAN STUDENTS ON A TOUR OF YUGOSLAVIA WAS STOPPED BY TWO YUGOSLAV POLICE OFFICERS, ONE LATER IDENTIFIED AS MEDOJEVIC BLAGOTU NUMBER 613465, FOR PASSING IN A NO PASSING ZONE IN VILLAGE OF ZATON. ALLEGEDLY FOR NO CLEAR REASON, AFTER LIMBACH SURRENDERED HIS DRIVER'S LICENSE BUT REFUSED TO SURRENDER PASSPORT, OFFICER BLAGOTU STRUCK LIMBACH, WHO THEN DISMOUNTED FROM BUS. BLAGOTU THEN BEAT THE UNRESISTING LIMBACH WITH HIS PISTOL, FISTS, AND A RUBBER BATON, ALSO STRIKING MISS BERCAW WHEN SHE PROTESTED AND ATTEMPTED TO PROTECT HER

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DRIVER. THE COUPLE WERE EVENTUALLY TAKEN TO THE BIJELO

POLJE POLICE STATION WHERE MR. LIMBACH WAS CHARGED, CONVICTED AND FINED FOR PASSING IN A NO-PASSING ZONE. THE TWO WERE RELEASED TO REJOIN TOUR GROUP WHO HAD BY THEN CAUGHT UP WITH THEM IN THE BUS AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF SEARCHING.

3. MISS BERCAW ALSO COMPLAINED THAT LIMBACH AND SHE WERE REPEATEDLY STRUCK BY POLICE DURING RIDE TO STATION, THAT AT STATION THEY WERE FORCED TO PAY BRIBES IN ORDER TO OBTAIN HELP IN TRANSLATING CHARGES AGAINST THEM, AND THAT THEY HAD TO PAY APPROXIMATELY \$1,000 DINARS IN FINES AND COURT COSTS AFTER BEING INFORMED THAT LIMBACH WAS GUILTY.

4. MISS BERCAW HAS PRESENTED US WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND STATEMENTS FROM HERSELF AND MEMBERS OF HER PARTY WHICH WE ARE POUCHING TO BELGRADE. SHE ALSO STATES THAT COPIES OF THESE STATEMENTS WERE SENT TO YOU FROM OUR EMBASSY IN ATHENS. PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH ANY INFORMATION OR RECOMMENDATIONS YOU HAVE REGARDING THIS ALLEGED INCIDENT. INGERSOLL

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